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PAGE 01 BEIJIN 56982 161132Z
ACTION EAP-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	ACDE-00	AID-01	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	OASY-00
	DODE-00	EB-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-16	L-01
	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	PA-01	PRS-01	P-01
	SP-00	SR-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-01	TRSE-00	USIE-00
	PRME-01	DRL-09	G-00	/055W			

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL SHANGHAI

AMCONSUL SHENYANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU

AMCONSUL CHENGDU

7946
DEPARTMENT OF STATE IM/IPS/CR/TR Date: 2/4/98
☐ RELEASE ☒ DECLASSIFY
☐ EXCISE ☐ DECLASSIFY EO Citations
☐ DENY IN PART

FOIA Exemptions _____ TS authority to
PA Exemptions _____ ☐ CLASSIFY as ☐ S or ☐ C Sec.
☐ DOWNGRADE TS to ☐ S or ☐ C

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 056982

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PHUM, CH

SUBJECT: "BEIJING 15" SENTENCES REPORTEDLY HANDED DOWN

REF: (A) 93 BEIJING 40186, (B) BEIJING 39968

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. (LOU) SUMMARY. SENTENCES IN THE CASE OF THE "BEIJING 15," TRIED IN JULY FOR FORMING A "COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY GROUP," WERE REPORTEDLY HANDED DOWN BY A BEIJING COURT ON

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PAGE 02 BEIJIN 56982 161132Z
DECEMBER 16. SENTENCES RANGED FROM 20 TO FIVE YEARS
IMPRISONMENT, WHILE CHARGES WERE DROPPED AGAINST FIVE
DEFENDANTS AND ONE WAS SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS PROBATION.
MFA HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION OFFICIALS PROMISED TO LOOK INTO
THE REPORT AND AGREED IF THEY RECEIVED ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION TO PROVIDE IT TO THE EMBASSY. END SUMMARY.

3. (U) THE BEIJING INTERMEDIATE COURT REPORTEDLY RULED
ON THE CASES OF 15 DISSIDENTS, KNOWN AS THE "BEIJING 15"
(A SIXTEENTH DEFENDANT WAS DROPPED FROM THE CASE FOR
MEDICAL REASONS, REF A) ON DECEMBER 16. THE DEFENDANTS
WERE TRIED IN JULY. EARLIER PRESS REPORTS INDICATING
SENTENCES
HAD BEEN HANDED DOWN IN AUGUST WERE DENIED BY THE LOCAL
COURT (REF B). ACCORDING TO REUTERS, HU SHIGEN WAS
SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS FOR "HEADING A COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY
GROUP" AND "COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY PROPAGANDA AND
INCITEMENT;" KANG YUCHUN 17 YEARS, LIU JINGSHENG 15, AND
WANG GUOQI 11 ON SIMILAR CHARGES. FOUR DEFENDANTS
CHARGED WITH PARTICIPATING IN A COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY
GROUP AND COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY PROPAGANDA AND INCITEMENT
WERE SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS, ANOTHER HAS SENTENCED TO
THREE YEARS AND ONE HAS PLACED "UNDER SUPERVISION" FOR
TWO YEARS. CHARGES WERE REPORTEDLY DROPPED AGAINST THE
OTHER FIVE DEFENDANTS. THE DEFENDANTS WERE ARRESTED FOR
ALLEGEDLY FORMING THREE DISSIDENT GROUPS THAT PLANNED TO
COMMEMORATE THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1989 TIANANMEN
INCIDENT.

4. (LOU) WHEN ASKED TO CONFIRM THE PRESS REPORT, MFA
HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION CHIEF LI BAODONG AGREED TO LOOK
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PAGE 03 BEIJIN 56982 161132Z
INTO THE MATTER AND PROMISED TO INFORM THE EMBASSY IF HE
ACQUIRED ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. EMBASSY IS ALSO
ATTEMPTING TO RECEIVE CONFIRMATION FROM THE BEIJING
INTERMEDIATE COURT.

5. (C) COMMENT: INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO THE "BEIJING
15" CERTAINLY PLAYED A ROLE IN THE HANDLING OF THESE

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CASES. THE COURT TOOK AN UNUSUALLY LONG TIME TO DELIVER ITS VERDICT AFTER THE TRIAL ENDED IN JULY. CHINESE LEADERS' PRE-OCCUPATION WITH MAINTAINING STABILITY MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE SEVERITY OF SEVERAL OF THE SENTENCES. DESPITE THIS, CHARGES WERE DROPPED AGAINST FIVE DEFENDANTS, AN OUTCOME RARE IN CASES INVOLVING COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY CHARGES.

6. (U) SUGGESTED PRESS GUIDANCE FOLLOWS:

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON REPORTS THAT 9 DISSIDENT HAVE BEEN GIVEN LENGTHY SENTENCES FOR COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY CRIMES IN BEIJING?

A. WE ARE AWARE OF THIS REPORT. THE UNITED STATES HAS REPEATEDLY AFFIRMED TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT ITS POSITION THAT FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ASSOCIATION ARE AMONG THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS WHICH ALL NATIONS SHOULD OBSERVE. WE STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT FAIR AND OPEN TRIALS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR SAFEGUARDING THESE AND OTHER RIGHTS. ROY

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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